



TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS: EVIDENCE FROM BURETI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Teacher job satisfaction remains a critical determinant of teacher retention, instructional effectiveness, and overall school performance. Despite ongoing education reforms in Kenya, concerns persist regarding declining teacher morale and commitment, with leadership practices increasingly recognised as an important organisational factor influencing teachers' workplace experiences. Although transactional leadership has been associated with improved employee performance in organisational settings, empirical evidence on its influence on teachers' job satisfaction within Kenyan public senior secondary schools remains limited. This study examined the effect of principals' transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, Kenya. The study was anchored on the Full Range Leadership Model and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y and adopted a correlational research design. A target population of 484 principals and teachers was identified, from which a sample of 165 respondents was selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected using structured questionnaires adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression. The findings revealed that teachers generally perceived principals to exhibit high levels of transactional leadership characterised by clear performance expectations, contingent rewards, timely feedback, and corrective supervision. Regression analysis established that transactional leadership exerted a strong positive and statistically significant effect on teachers' job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.666$, $t = 11.02$, $p < .001$), explaining 44.4% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.444$; $F(1,152) = 121.42$, $p < .001$). The study concludes that transactional leadership is a significant predictor of teachers' job satisfaction. It recommends that principals institutionalise transparent performance expectations, timely performance feedback, and equitable reward and recognition systems to strengthen teacher motivation, commitment, and retention.

KEYWORDS: Transactional leadership; teachers' job satisfaction; school leadership; principals; public senior secondary schools; Kenya.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher job satisfaction remains one of the most widely investigated determinants of educational effectiveness because it influences teacher motivation, organisational commitment, instructional quality, retention, and ultimately students' learning outcomes. Across education systems, schools that retain motivated and satisfied teachers are more likely to achieve sustained academic improvement than those characterised by low morale and high staff turnover (Lumbantoruan et al., 2020). While teacher job satisfaction is shaped by multiple organisational and personal factors, school leadership consistently emerges as one of the most influential determinants because principals directly shape the professional environment within which teachers perform their duties.

Among contemporary leadership approaches, transactional leadership has attracted considerable scholarly attention because of its emphasis on clearly defined expectations, performance monitoring, contingent rewards, and corrective actions. Unlike leadership approaches that primarily seek to inspire through vision or shared participation, transactional leadership operates through structured exchanges between leaders and followers, whereby desired performance is reinforced through recognition, rewards, and accountability mechanisms. Within school settings, such practices may enhance teachers' perceptions of fairness, role clarity, organisational support, and professional recognition, all of which have been associated with higher levels of job satisfaction.

Empirical evidence from different educational contexts generally supports the positive contribution of transactional leadership to teachers' workplace outcomes, although the magnitude of this relationship remains inconsistent across settings. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Skopak and Hadzaihmetovic (2022) found that contingent reward practices significantly enhanced teachers' motivation and overall job satisfaction by creating clear performance expectations and recognising professional achievement. Similar findings have been reported in Indonesia, where Lumbantoruan et al. (2020) observed that transactional leadership strengthened organisational commitment and satisfaction by promoting accountability and performance-oriented management. In Ghana, Mahamudu et al. (2023) likewise reported that structured leadership practices improved teachers' motivation through systematic supervision, feedback, and



recognition. Collectively, these studies suggest that transactional leadership can positively influence teacher attitudes when implemented consistently and fairly.

Within Sub-Saharan Africa, however, evidence remains mixed. While several studies report positive associations between transactional leadership and teacher motivation, others indicate that excessive reliance on performance monitoring without adequate professional support may weaken intrinsic motivation and reduce teachers' psychological attachment to their schools. These inconsistencies imply that the effectiveness of transactional leadership is likely to depend on contextual conditions, institutional culture, and the manner in which leadership practices are enacted within individual schools rather than on the leadership style itself.

In Kenya, improving teacher motivation and job satisfaction has become increasingly important following educational reforms associated with the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Senior secondary school principals are expected not only to ensure curriculum implementation but also to create organisational environments that encourage professional growth, accountability, collaboration, and instructional excellence. Consequently, principals are increasingly required to balance performance management with supportive leadership practices that sustain teacher commitment. Previous Kenyan studies have shown that performance-oriented leadership practices can improve teacher effectiveness and organisational performance (Chepkirui et al., 2023). Nevertheless, persistent concerns regarding teacher transfers, declining morale, and uneven commitment across public schools suggest that leadership practices capable of sustaining teacher satisfaction remain insufficiently understood within the evolving CBC environment.

Although considerable literature has examined school leadership and teacher outcomes, three important gaps remain. First, much of the existing research investigates leadership broadly or combines multiple leadership styles, making it difficult to isolate the specific contribution of transactional leadership. Second, empirical evidence focusing on public senior secondary schools operating under Kenya's restructured education system remains limited. Third, relatively few studies have examined transactional leadership within county-level contexts where organisational cultures, resource availability, and institutional practices may differ substantially from national patterns. These gaps limit the contextual applicability of existing evidence to schools implementing contemporary educational reforms.

The present study addresses these gaps by examining the effect of principals' transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, Kenya. By providing empirical evidence from the recently established senior secondary school context, the study contributes to the growing literature on educational leadership while offering practical insights for strengthening leadership practices that promote teacher satisfaction, professional commitment, and improved school performance.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Transactional leadership is expected to enhance teachers' job satisfaction by establishing clear performance expectations, recognising achievement, providing timely feedback, and reinforcing accountability. Within Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) reforms, principals are increasingly required to employ such leadership practices to foster teacher commitment, improve instructional quality, and strengthen school performance. Despite these expectations, teacher dissatisfaction, transfers, declining morale, and reduced organisational commitment continue to be reported in many public secondary schools. In Bureti Sub-County, records from the Sub-County Director of Education (2016–2020) indicated persistent teacher transfers and resignations, particularly in rural schools, disrupting instructional continuity and creating staffing challenges. Although previous studies generally report positive relationships between transactional leadership and teacher job satisfaction (Skopak & Hadzaihmetovic, 2022; Lumbantoruan et al., 2020; Yohannes & Wasonga, 2023), findings remain inconsistent across educational contexts, suggesting that the effectiveness of transactional leadership may be context-dependent. Furthermore, existing Kenyan studies have largely examined leadership styles as broad or composite constructs, providing limited evidence on the independent effect of transactional leadership, particularly within public senior secondary schools operating under the recently implemented CBC framework. This contextual and empirical gap limits understanding of how transactional leadership contributes to teachers' job satisfaction in the evolving Kenyan education system. Accordingly, this study examined the effect of principals' transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, thereby providing context-specific evidence to inform leadership practice and educational policy.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To examine the effect of principals' transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, Kenya.



4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H₀: Principals' transactional leadership style has no statistically significant effect on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, Kenya.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was anchored on the Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM) developed by Bass and Avolio, which conceptualises leadership as a continuum comprising transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire behaviours. The model posits that effective leadership is achieved through the appropriate application of different leadership behaviours depending on organisational needs and contextual demands. Among these dimensions, transactional leadership focuses on clarifying expectations, monitoring performance, and reinforcing desired behaviours through contingent rewards and corrective actions (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Colpitts, 2023).

Within educational settings, transactional leadership emphasises structured supervision, accountability, and performance management. School principals establish explicit performance standards, communicate institutional expectations, monitor teachers' performance, provide timely feedback, and recognise achievement through formal or informal rewards. These leadership behaviours create role clarity, reduce ambiguity, and reinforce desirable professional practices, thereby influencing teachers' attitudes towards their work and the organisation. Consequently, transactional leadership is expected to enhance teachers' job satisfaction by strengthening perceptions of fairness, recognition, and organisational support.

The FRLM further recognises that leadership effectiveness is contingent upon organisational context. In school environments characterised by curriculum reforms, increased accountability, and heightened performance expectations, transactional leadership provides mechanisms for maintaining instructional standards while motivating teachers to achieve institutional goals. Within the Kenyan Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) framework, principals are increasingly expected to balance instructional leadership with performance management, making transactional leadership particularly relevant.

The theory therefore provides an appropriate framework for explaining the relationship between principals' transactional leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. It guided the operationalisation of transactional leadership into measurable dimensions, including contingent rewards, performance monitoring, corrective action, communication of expectations, and policy enforcement, whose influence on teachers' job satisfaction was empirically examined in this study.

6. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Transactional leadership has attracted considerable scholarly attention because of its emphasis on performance management, contingent rewards, corrective supervision, and accountability. Unlike transformational leadership, which seeks to inspire followers through vision and intrinsic motivation, transactional leadership operates on an exchange relationship in which leaders clarify expectations, monitor performance, and provide rewards or corrective actions based on the attainment of agreed objectives. Within educational institutions, this leadership approach is considered particularly relevant because schools operate within formal accountability systems that require principals to establish clear performance standards while maintaining instructional quality. Consequently, researchers have increasingly examined whether transactional leadership enhances teachers' job satisfaction by promoting fairness, recognition, and role clarity.

Evidence from developed and emerging economies generally supports a positive association between transactional leadership and job satisfaction, although the magnitude of the relationship varies across organisational contexts. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Skopak and Hadzaihmetovic (2022) reported that contingent reward was the strongest transactional leadership dimension influencing employee satisfaction because recognition of good performance increased employees' perceptions of organisational fairness and managerial support. Likewise, Lumbantoruan et al. (2020), studying employees in Indonesia, found that transactional leadership explained a substantial proportion of employee satisfaction through structured incentives, promotions, and recognition. These findings suggest that clearly defined expectations and performance-based rewards remain effective mechanisms for improving employees' attitudes towards their work. However, both studies were conducted outside the education sector, limiting their applicability to schools where teachers' motivation is influenced not only by extrinsic rewards but also by professional autonomy, instructional responsibilities, and learner outcomes.

Within the African context, empirical evidence similarly demonstrates that transactional leadership contributes positively to teachers' job satisfaction, although its effectiveness appears to depend on how leaders balance accountability with professional support. In Ethiopia, Yohannes and Wasonga (2023) established that teachers reported higher job satisfaction where principals consistently monitored instructional performance, recognised achievement, and provided timely corrective feedback. Conversely, teachers working under principals who failed to reinforce performance expectations reported comparatively lower levels of professional satisfaction. Comparable findings were reported in Uganda, where Nakanwagi (2018) observed that transactional leadership strengthened organisational commitment through contingent rewards and management-by-exception, while recommending that transactional



practices be complemented by more supportive leadership behaviours to sustain long-term employee commitment. Collectively, these studies suggest that transactional leadership enhances satisfaction primarily through structured supervision and recognition, although excessive emphasis on compliance may limit its long-term motivational capacity.

Evidence from Kenya reflects a similar pattern. Maundu, Namusonge, and Simiyu (2020) found that transactional leadership was positively associated with teacher engagement in public secondary schools, although the relationship was relatively modest compared with more participatory leadership approaches. Their findings indicated that while contingent rewards and performance monitoring improved teachers' dedication and accountability, they were less effective in fostering deeper psychological attachment to the profession. Similarly, Chepkirui, Kitonga, and Pete (2023) established a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and employees' job satisfaction in Kenyan public universities, concluding that recognition, structured supervision, and performance management improved employee commitment and organisational effectiveness. Nevertheless, the authors argued that transactional leadership should be integrated with professional development and supportive leadership practices to sustain employee satisfaction over time. These findings reinforce the argument that transactional leadership remains an important management strategy within Kenyan educational institutions, particularly where accountability and performance management are central organisational priorities.

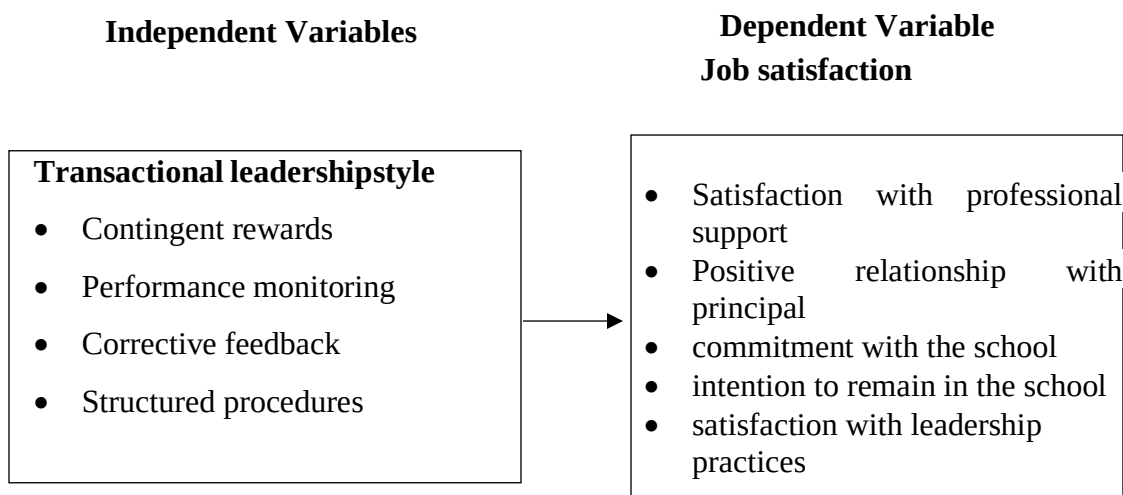
Although previous studies consistently demonstrate a positive association between transactional leadership and job satisfaction, three important limitations remain evident. First, much of the existing evidence originates from corporate organisations or higher education institutions, with relatively few studies focusing specifically on public senior secondary schools. Second, studies conducted within Kenya have largely examined transactional leadership as one component of broader leadership frameworks rather than evaluating its independent contribution to teachers' job satisfaction. Third, the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum has fundamentally altered principals' leadership responsibilities by increasing expectations for instructional accountability, teacher performance management, and continuous professional support. Consequently, findings generated before or outside this policy environment may not adequately explain current leadership dynamics in Kenyan senior secondary schools.

Accordingly, this study sought to address these contextual and empirical gaps by examining the effect of principals' transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County. By focusing on transactional leadership as an independent construct within the contemporary CBC context, the study extends existing literature and provides context-specific evidence to inform school leadership practice and educational policy.

7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework illustrates the hypothesised relationship between principals' transactional leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools. In this study, principals' transactional leadership style constitutes the independent variable, while teachers' job satisfaction is the dependent variable. Transactional leadership is operationalised through contingent rewards, performance monitoring, corrective action, clear expectations, and adherence to established procedures. Teachers' job satisfaction is reflected in teachers' satisfaction with professional support, working relationships, leadership practices, commitment to the school, and their intention to remain in the teaching profession.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework





8. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopted a positivist research philosophy and employed a cross-sectional correlational research design to examine the effect of principals' transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, Kenya. A correlational design was considered appropriate because the study sought to establish the magnitude and direction of the relationship between transactional leadership and teachers' job satisfaction without manipulating the study variables. The target population comprised teachers and principals drawn from all public senior secondary schools in the Sub-County. Using Yamane's (1967) sample size determination formula, a sample of 154 respondents was selected through proportionate stratified and simple random sampling techniques for teachers, while principals were selected using census sampling because of their relatively small number and their strategic role in school leadership. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires comprising Likert-scale items adapted from validated leadership and job satisfaction instruments and contextualised to the Kenyan secondary school setting. Prior to the main survey, the instruments were pilot-tested to establish their validity and reliability. Content validity was assessed through expert review, while internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with all study constructs exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability.

The collected data were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarise respondents' perceptions of principals' transactional leadership practices and teachers' job satisfaction. Inferential analysis involved Pearson's product-moment correlation to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the study variables, followed by simple linear regression to test the study hypothesis and estimate the predictive effect of transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant university ethics committee, while research authorisation was granted by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Permission to access schools was obtained from the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the County and Sub-County Directors of Education, and the respective school principals. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

9. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

9.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Transactional Leadership Style

Table 1: Teachers' perceptions of principals' transactional leadership style

Statement	SD f (%)	D f (%)	U f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	Mean	SD
The principal uses rewards to encourage good performance	15 (11.1)	10 (7.4)	17 (12.6)	59 (43.7)	34 (25.2)	3.644	1.249
The principal sets clear performance targets for teachers	8 (5.9)	10 (7.4)	13 (8.6)	48 (35.6)	56 (41.5)	3.993	1.162
The principal provides immediate feedback when teachers meet or fail expectations	12 (8.9)	6 (4.4)	10 (7.4)	71 (52.6)	36 (26.7)	3.837	1.141
The principal takes corrective action when teacher performance declines	8 (5.9)	8 (5.9)	7 (5.2)	48 (35.6)	64 (47.4)	4.126	1.136
The principal believes that following school policies and achieving results is the key to success	5 (3.7)	7 (5.2)	26 (19.3)	72 (53.3)	25 (18.5)	3.778	0.936

The findings in Table 1 indicate that transactional leadership was widely practised by principals in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County. Across all five indicators, the majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their principals employed transactional leadership behaviours, with mean scores ranging from 3.64 to 4.13, suggesting generally favourable perceptions of this leadership style. The highest-rated practice was principals taking corrective action when teacher performance declined ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.14$), while the use of rewards to encourage good performance recorded the lowest mean ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.25$). These findings suggest that principals placed greater emphasis on performance monitoring and accountability than on reward-based motivation.

A substantial majority of respondents acknowledged that principals established clear performance expectations, provided timely feedback, and intervened when performance standards were not achieved. Specifically, 77.1% of teachers agreed that principals set clear performance targets, 79.3% reported receiving prompt feedback regarding their performance, and 83.0% indicated that principals took corrective action whenever performance declined. These findings demonstrate that performance management constitutes a central feature of school leadership within the study area. The relatively moderate standard deviations (0.94–1.16) further indicate reasonable consistency in teachers' perceptions across the sampled schools.



Although teachers generally perceived transactional leadership positively, the findings also reveal some variability in the implementation of reward systems. While 68.9% of respondents agreed that principals used rewards to encourage good performance, 18.5% disagreed and 12.6% remained undecided. The comparatively larger standard deviation ($SD = 1.25$) suggests that recognition and reward practices were less consistently implemented than other transactional leadership behaviours. In contrast, greater consensus was observed regarding principals' emphasis on policy compliance and results-oriented management ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 0.94$), indicating that accountability and adherence to institutional procedures are firmly embedded within school leadership practices.

The present findings are consistent with Skopak and Hadzaihmetovic (2022), who found that contingent rewards and structured performance management improve employee satisfaction and organisational effectiveness. Similarly, Yohannes and Wasonga (2023) reported that transactional leadership enhances teachers' job satisfaction through clear expectations, recognition, and continuous performance feedback. The findings further support those of Nakanwagi (2018) and Chepkirui, Kitonga, and Pete (2023), who concluded that systematic supervision, corrective feedback, and clearly defined performance standards strengthen employee commitment and satisfaction. Collectively, these studies and the present findings demonstrate that transactional leadership promotes organisational effectiveness by reinforcing accountability, recognising achievement, and maintaining clear performance expectations.

To complement teachers' responses, principals also reported a high level of engagement in transactional leadership practices. Their self-assessments indicated that they consistently established clear expectations, utilised incentives to motivate teachers, monitored instructional performance, and emphasised adherence to school policies, with mean scores ranging from 4.11 to 4.42. While principals generally rated their leadership practices more positively than teachers, both groups converged in recognising transactional leadership as a dominant management approach within public senior secondary schools. This convergence enhances confidence in the consistency of the findings while suggesting that minor differences may reflect variations in teachers' day-to-day experiences of leadership practices.

9.2 Regression Analysis

Table 2: Simple linear regression results for transactional leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction

Variable	B	Standard Error	β	t	p-value
Constant	1.782	0.301	-	5.920	<0.001
Transactional Leadership Style	0.331	0.030	0.666	11.020	<0.001
Model Summary					
Statistic					Value
R					0.666
R ²					0.444
F(1,152)					121.42
p-value					<0.001

The regression analysis established a statistically significant positive relationship between principals' transactional leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction ($R = 0.666$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.444$) indicates that transactional leadership explained 44.4% of the variation in teachers' job satisfaction. This represents substantial explanatory power, suggesting that nearly half of the observed differences in teachers' job satisfaction can be attributed to differences in principals' transactional leadership practices. The overall regression model was statistically significant ($F(1,152) = 121.42$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that transactional leadership is an important predictor of teachers' job satisfaction.

The regression coefficient further demonstrates that transactional leadership exerted a strong positive influence on teachers' job satisfaction ($B = 0.331$, $\beta = 0.666$, $t = 11.02$, $p < 0.001$). The positive beta coefficient indicates that improvements in principals' transactional leadership practices are associated with corresponding increases in teachers' job satisfaction. Specifically, a one-unit increase in transactional leadership was associated with a 0.331-unit increase in teachers' job satisfaction. Consequently, the null hypothesis stating that principals' transactional leadership style has no statistically significant effect on teachers' job satisfaction was rejected.

The findings reinforce the proposition of the Full Range Leadership Model, which argues that contingent rewards, active performance monitoring, and management-by-exception enhance employee motivation and organisational outcomes by clarifying expectations and reinforcing desirable behaviours. Within the context of public senior secondary schools, principals who consistently recognise teacher performance, provide constructive feedback, and enforce performance standards create work environments that promote greater professional satisfaction among teachers.



The findings are consistent with those reported by Skopak and Hadzaihmetovic (2022), who demonstrated that contingent reward systems significantly improve employee satisfaction and performance. They also corroborate the findings of Lumbantoruan et al. (2020), who established that transactional leadership accounted for a substantial proportion of employee satisfaction through recognition and performance-based incentives. Similarly, Yohannes and Wasonga (2023) found that transactional leadership significantly enhanced teachers' job satisfaction in Ethiopian schools by recognising achievement and providing regular feedback. Comparable findings were reported by Chepkirui, Kitonga, and Pete (2023) in Kenya and Nakanwagi (2018) in Uganda, both of whom concluded that structured supervision, contingent rewards, and corrective performance management positively influence employee commitment and job satisfaction. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that transactional leadership remains an effective leadership approach for enhancing teacher satisfaction, particularly in educational environments where accountability, performance standards, and instructional quality are central organisational priorities.

10. CONCLUSION

The study examined the effect of principals' transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kenya. The findings demonstrate that transactional leadership exerts a significant positive influence on teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers generally perceived their principals as setting clear performance expectations, providing timely feedback, recognizing good performance, enforcing school policies, and taking corrective action when necessary. Principals similarly reported frequent use of these leadership practices, and the convergence of both perspectives strengthens confidence in the consistency of the findings.

The regression results further confirmed that transactional leadership significantly predicted teachers' job satisfaction, explaining 44.4% of its variance. Among the leadership styles investigated in the broader study, transactional leadership emerged as the strongest predictor of job satisfaction. These findings support the proposition of the Full Range Leadership Model that contingent reward and active management-by-exception can enhance employee attitudes when implemented fairly and consistently. Within the context of public senior secondary schools, transactional leadership therefore provides an effective mechanism for strengthening teacher motivation through accountability, recognition, and structured performance management.

Overall, the study concludes that principals who establish clear expectations, recognize teacher achievement, provide constructive feedback, and consistently apply performance standards are more likely to foster higher levels of teacher job satisfaction. Strengthening these leadership practices may contribute to improved teacher commitment, retention, instructional effectiveness, and ultimately better educational outcomes.

11. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings have important implications for educational leadership policy and practice. First, principals should strengthen transactional leadership practices by establishing transparent performance expectations and communicating them consistently to teachers. Clear performance standards reduce role ambiguity and promote accountability within schools.

Second, school leaders should institutionalize structured recognition and reward systems that acknowledge teachers' professional achievements. Recognition does not necessarily require financial incentives; timely appreciation, professional acknowledgement, leadership opportunities, and career advancement can equally reinforce teacher commitment and satisfaction.

Third, principals should provide regular performance feedback that is constructive, timely, and developmental rather than punitive. Continuous feedback enables teachers to improve instructional practice while strengthening professional relationships between school leaders and staff.

Finally, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Ministry of Education should incorporate transactional leadership competencies—including performance management, feedback provision, recognition systems, and instructional supervision—into leadership preparation programmes and continuous professional development for school principals. Strengthening these competencies may improve teacher satisfaction, reduce staff turnover, and enhance school performance under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

12. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was conducted among public senior secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. Leadership practices and teachers' job satisfaction may differ across counties, school categories, and private institutions.



The study also employed a cross-sectional survey design, which captures respondents' perceptions at a single point in time and therefore does not establish causal relationships. Future studies should consider longitudinal designs to examine how transactional leadership influences teacher job satisfaction over time.

In addition, the study focused exclusively on transactional leadership. Future research should investigate how transactional leadership interacts with other leadership approaches, particularly instructional and transformational leadership, to influence teacher outcomes. Comparative studies across different educational levels and geographical regions would also enhance understanding of contextual variations in leadership effectiveness.

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